

Erie County Human Relations Commission

Minutes – June 25, 2015

Attendance

Commissioners: Judy Jobes, Willie McAdory, Bob Howden, Amy Danzer

Guests Patricia Kidd, Hollie Nebelski, Fair Housing Resource Center, Inc. (FHRC) Painesville, OH

Staff: Joe Aguglia, Heidi Meyer, Charlotte Scalise

Meeting began at 6:15 pm

Introductions were made.

Patricia began by introducing the report they developed. Given the timing of when the testing could be done, it was just able to be completed yesterday (given the short time frame to complete the report prior to the funding deadline of June 30 given by the City of Erie).

There were eighteen testers recruited; eight completed the training and wanted to continue with doing the testing. FHRC used the list we gave of landlords about which there were concerns in addition to market sampling. It was very difficult to match available units with the list we had given FHRC. Because of the inability to match, they relied heavily on sampling. All of the landlords of properties that were tested had at least five or more properties. It has been a provider's market so when there are many rental applications, this allows the bias of the landlords to show through. Provider's market problems include some units being rented very quickly and the likelihood of the landlord not showing up for the appointment or not returning calls.

There was probable cause for three cases (two for disability and one for race). There were four no probable cause cases while there were seven cases that were inclusive.

We reviewed copies of the data that was submitted by the tester and the discussion between the staff members (which they have never shared previously). This review showed the conversations and details which led to the experts to determine probable cause, no probable cause or indeterminate for each test.

FHRC was sending letters to landlords that had shown probable cause during testing. The letter said the landlord had been tested, how they didn't handle the situation properly and suggesting they receive training or further education.

The FHRC members left and the Commission members discussed how to address what was in the report. The report is to be sent to the city Economic Development Office and along with a packet of information that needs to be completed given the funding source. Discussion centered about if or how to disseminate the information. It was felt best to determine how the Commission and Advisory Board will address the need for training of those in the protected classes as well as landlords and other interested parties. It was suggested to have the Commission meet with the Advisory Board at their regular meeting on July 21 to plan a strategy. The regular Commission meeting will be held July 28 to discuss the meeting with the Advisory Board.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.